

Runaway

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Summary: Hiccup originally planned to run away. That plan was thwarted because a jealous Astrid decided to follow him to the cove. But what if that intervention... didn't happen?

AU

Runaway

****RUNAWAY****

Dear Dad, _I'm sorry I have to do this, but I don't see any other choice..._

Astrid stared around the empty arena, breathing hard. She could imagine the roars of the villagers, the clang of dragons against bars that would start tomorrow morning. She tried to focus, imagining the fight...

I've been lying to you, to the whole village and you didn't see it because...

She was an imposter.

...Well, I guess I just didn't want you to.

Astrid had always wanted to be the _best_, to _win_ at every competition, every test of strength, just because she could.

That night that I said I hit a Night Fury?

She'd never wanted her victory to come at the cost of heartbreak, though. The sight of the Chief's face when he'd appeared with the note was heart-rending, even to hardened Viking warriors. He looked as if he'd lost... everything.

Well, I did.

Stoick had announced that Hiccup had run away from home, and that since this was breaking the rules he would have the privilege of fighting the Nightmare revoked. Astrid automatically moved up to first with that announcement, though the other teens were too busy protesting the unfairness of it all to congratulate her. Or even notice her.

It landed near Raven's Point, just like I said it would...

Now that Hiccup had 'broken the ice' with the teens, it didn't matter what he did " they were on his side.

... And it was trapped by my net when I freed him.

The chief had disappeared into the Blacksmith's shop with Gobber for over an hour before that first announcement. Afterward, Gobber had pulled the teens aside and quietly given them permission to read Hiccup's note. An awkward silence had ensued before Fishlegs volunteered to read it aloud.

_Yes, freed. I really __can't__ kill dragons. ..._

Astrid didn't want to win by default. She wanted to _win_. By herself.

And he didn't kill me either...

But apparently Hiccup was giving away his victory. Right when he had won over Berk " he could have _taken_ _over_ Berk, in time, since Stoick likely would have made him the next chief " he decided to run.

He hid in a cove after I freed him, and he's my best friend now.

Astrid just couldn't understand that. Until now.

His tail fin was damaged, so I made him a new one and taught him how to fly with it...

Because standing in the ring, facing the empty arena and seeing the villagers in her mind's eye, she was scared.

That's why I'm writing this. Dad, I'm leaving.

She wasn't the one chosen by the village elder, _Hiccup_ was. She wasn't the best in class either " no matter how hard she'd tried, _Hiccup_ was.

It's been nice knowing you and all, but I'm no Viking, and I can't pass that final exam...

The outcast, the one every Viking, teen or adult, picked on, the one who even Stoick seemed to have given up hope in.

... Because I can't kill a dragon.

He'd beaten them all.

I won't.

And Astrid didn't believe it was all some trick like Hiccup himself seemed to believe. Hiccup had trained a Night Fury. He had knocked out a Gronkle and a Nadder with his bare hands, scared a Zippleback into submission, tricked a Terrible Terror into going back into its cage moments after leaving it.

If you need proof to believe me...

Astrid had seen it. With her own eyes. And she'd seen Stoick and Gobber come back from their 'search party' shaking their heads and looking hopelessly confused.

... Go up to Raven's Point.

Gobber had told the searchers that he and Stoick had searched Raven's Point, and left it at that.

You'll find a flattened pine not far East of the sea view and if you follow it, you should find what's left of my net. From there it should be pretty easy to find the cove.

Clearly they'd found the crash sight.

Oh, and to my classmates...

She'd silently joined a group of searchers, along with the worried teens " Ruffnut and Tuffnut had quietly argued most of the time, mostly about whether or not they could find him since he'd been hiding a Night Fury without anyone suspecting it, and Astrid had pretended not to hear them but was actually listening intently.

I'm sorry, I'm not really the greatest dragon fighter of all time...

They didn't care if he was a traitor. They didn't care if he'd run away.

...Toothless just taught me a few tricks.

He was their friend.

Hiccup could have defeated the Monstrous Nightmare with no weapons. He'd already proven he could with four other types of dragons, and probably his Night Fury (_Toothless? Please tell me that's not its name_) too.

And Astrid...

They wouldn't find Hiccup unless he wanted to be found. And he was the best one for the task she had now.

... The Nightmare's yours.

Well, she'd chosen it.

"The Nightmare's yours," she repeated grimly to herself.

Was it ever.

End
file.